



Making a  
difference  
with data

## 2. Data and information use - ethnicity



Te Pou o te  
Whakaaro Nui





# Data and information use – ethnicity

## *He manu anō te manu kai poroporo*

### *He manu anō te manu miro*

*The bird that consumes the poisonous poroporo is quite dissimilar to the bird that consumes the miro berry. Beware those that don't know the difference!*

A wide range of organisations use ethnicity data to inform, plan and evaluate services and policies. These may be local authorities, the Ministry of Health or other government agencies. This data and the information it provides can be used to explore who is accessing services, what services are being accessed, and how services are working for tāngata whai ora<sup>1</sup> and people of other ethnicities. Services should consider how this information can support greater health equity.

The Ministry of Health's Ethnicity data recording and reporting (2009) identifies:

- ethnicity is self-perceived; a person should self-identify their ethnic affiliation wherever feasible
- a person can belong to more than one ethnic group.

## Cultural overview

- The mental health and addiction workforce should be familiar with Te Whare Tapa Whā, a well-regarded model to guide practice in health services. The Ministry of Health website has more information on Te Whare Tapa Whā and other Māori health models.
- Whānau Ora is a platform for tāngata whai ora to create and own change. Māori people may not equate wellness as relating to an individual alone, but rather to wellness within the whānau and social relationships, and being able to contribute and meet whānau responsibilities.
- Engagement with the Takarangi Competency Framework is voluntary and is very useful for services that do not have a quality assurance or workforce development tool for addressing work with Māori people.

*“Ethnicity is not fixed and may change over time, or people may identify themselves differently in different environments. Many aspects of an individual's circumstances affect how they identify their ethnicities and this may differ markedly from how a third party might identify them. Some of these aspects are important for the interpretation of data.”*

(p.3) Statistics New Zealand (2005a)

<sup>1</sup> – People who use services are referred to as tangata whai ora (person seeking wellness), or tāngata whai ora (people seeking wellness) when referring to a group.



## Key concepts and sound practice

When collecting and using data and information it is important to ensure:

- services collaborate with a tangata whai ora and their whānau so they are part of the process
- tāngata whai ora and their whānau understand:
  - ▶ what is happening
  - ▶ why the data and information is being gathered (including the purpose and value)
  - ▶ how the information is used (including understanding of non-identifying data collection)
  - ▶ the process available to them to address any issues that may arise
  - ▶ how the data and information relates to their lives, will inform their service journey, and opportunities to integrate this into their recovery planning
  - ▶ the knowledge gained is used to develop pathways to better support recovery and wellbeing
- ethnicity collected and recorded is self-determined by the tangata whai ora and their whānau
- outcome measurement is discussed with a tangata whai ora and their whānau and is integrated into routine clinical practice – discussion about findings of outcome measurement includes reflection on their perspective, particularly around items of clinical and personal significance
- organisational and community resources to support cultural assessment practice and expertise are explored, for example, tāngata whai ora and their whānau are offered opportunities for karakia and whakawātea.

## References

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